

## Preservation Restrictions Sought for DR&HS Drew House

By SUSANNA SHEEHAN

Selectmen were asked this week to sign a copy of a historical preservation restriction on the Duxbury Rural and Historical Society's "Drew House" at 685 Washington St., which has a signed purchase and sale agreement and a pending closing date of Nov. 20.

Director of the DR&HS, Patrick Browne, asked selectmen to sign the preservation restriction because their signatures are required by state law. The DR&HS has been working with the Massachusetts Historical Commission to draft the historical preservation restrictions on the 1826 timber-framed, Federal-style house to preserve the house's main block and the marsh views across the property. The house sits almost in the marshland near the Blue Fish River. The Society is selling the house to generate funds to offset the long-term expenses at its new archival library in the Wright building.

Selectmen, who signed preservation restrictions 10 years ago for the 1804 Sampson-Gifford House at 104 Standish St., said they wanted town counsel to review the document before they approved it. They plan to vote on the restriction before the Special Town Meeting at their posted meeting at 7 p.m. The arrangement is legally binding and recorded in the Registry of Deeds.

The Drew House is worthy of a preservation restriction because it is part of the Old Shipbuilder's Historic District, is listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places, and is "a culturally, historically and architecturally significant property," according to the 16-page preservation restriction document.

The restriction carefully spells out what can and cannot

be done to the Drew House. It cannot be moved, demolished, or razed, although the 1957 ell addition may be razed and rebuilt on the same footprint. The interior can receive "substantial renovation" because the house has been serving as the Society's archives and previously as its headquarters. The structure can be raised up with town approval as long as the change is not detrimental to the architectural or historical integrity of the house.

The preservation restriction states that the land on which the house sits must "remain in substantially the condition as at the time of the execution of the agreement," and it doesn't prohibit a pier from being built, providing the town approves it.

The DR&HS will have approval over renovations and repairs. Part of the restriction document spells out guidelines that govern major and minor alterations on things such as paint, windows, doors, the building's exterior and the landscape. The intent of the preservation restriction is to enable the (DR&HS) to review proposed alterations and assess their impact on the integrity of the structure, not to preclude future change. (DR&HS)'s staff will attempt to work with the property owners to develop mutually satisfactory solutions, which are in the best interest of the property," states the document.

In other business, selectmen:

- Opened the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Articles are due in draft form to the selectmen's office by Dec. 5.

- Accepted the gift of a wooden bench dedicated to the memory of Ed McCusker at the North Hill golf course's club house patio. The bench was donated by Ellen Wilson.

Duxbury Clipper

Wednesday, November 8, 2006